

THE WORKER

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# Charges Govt. Weapons Go To Ultra-Right 'Minutemen'

**THE GUN-TOTING** ultra-Right "Minutemen" organization "is in part supported, subsidized and encouraged by the Federal Government," it was charged by Rep. Henry B. Gonzalez, (D-Texas) in the House last week.

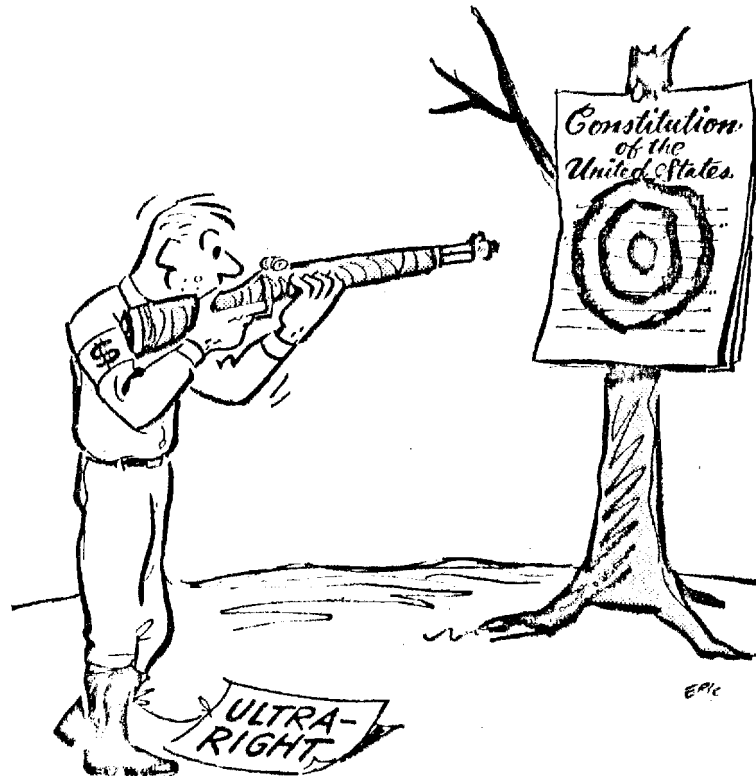
"There is strong evidence," Gonzalez said, "that through the surplus weapons program and scrap material program of the Department of Defense, extremist rightwing organization such as the Minutemen and known criminal offenders are able to obtain in great quantities at nominal cost automatic weapons including submachine guns and tripod-mounted machine guns, flamethrowers, aerial bombs, mortars, and other instruments of war."

Gonzalez's charge followed the arrest on May 19 of "former" Minutemen leader Richard Lauchli, and Donald Sturgis, who had stashed away on a farm in Clinton, Ill., a cache of weapons which included 100 submachine guns, a truck load of bombs and flame throwers.

Gonzalez said this situation was of special interest to him since the Minutemen had him among 20 Congressmen on a list headed "In Memoriam" after they had voted against the continuance of the House Un-American Activities Committee in Feb., 1963.

The list was contained in the March 15, 1963, issue of the Minutemen publication, On Target, preceded by this threat:

"These patriots (the Minutemen) are not going to let you take their freedom away from them. They have learned the silent knife, the strangler's cord, the target rifle that hits sparrows at 200 yards. Only their leaders restrain them.



"Traitors beware. Even now the cross-hairs are on the back of your necks."

Gonzalez noted that through a little known Defense Department program called the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice, some 400,000 members of the National Rifle Association receive ammunition and weapons at government expense.

He said that in 1963, 60 million rounds of ammunition were distributed. The cost was \$1,627,442.

Gonzalez inserted into the record a newsletter of the "Paul Revere Associated Yeomen, Inc.," of New Orleans, La. The newsletter predicted vic-

tory in November for a "Goldwater-Nixon" ticket, and urged its readers to forestall "disorderly liberal and Reds" retaliation by joining "The National Rifle Association," and "The Minutemen."

It urged the stocking up "on rifles, shotguns, pistols — all of standard make; with lots of standard ammunition. Arm every member of your family who can shoot a gun."

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#### **SAFEGUARDS**

Gonzalez said he wanted to know what safeguards, if any, surround the civilian marksmanship program.

"I would like to know," he said, "whether the Defense Department puts weapons into the hands of anyone who comes along, or whether it investigates the individuals who seek to purchase these materials -- perhaps I should say material. I would like to know how weapons are declared surplus and scrap and how much they are sold for."

Gonzales said that for some time he has been trying to find out through Secretary of Defense McNamara why sales of these weapons were going on. He also wrote to Attorney Gen. Robert Kennedy and was told

that the government knew all about the Minutemen and would continue to study the matter.

"This was not a satisfactory answer, for the Justice Department could be still studying the matter when the shooting war begins," Gonzalez said. "Apparently the government is subsidizing a private army and a private defense department."

The Minutemen were organized in June, 1960, and operated openly in Illinois.

Lauchli has a history of similar arrests.

In 1949, he was found guilty of having taken 13 bazookas from the military proving ground at Madison, Ind. He was fined \$500 and placed on probation for two years.

In 1955, he was arrested in Springfield, Ill., and charged with the manufacture of machine guns. Court records show he was found guilty, fined \$600 and given six months probation.

In October, 1960, following maneuvers organized by his organization at Shiloh, he was again arrested. The maneuvers featured live ammunition. Lauchli was charged with illegal possession of firearms, but the charges were dropped by a Belleville judge because Lauchli had a class 4 dealers license from the Federal Government.

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